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Lucia A Keegan 08/29/2006 03:28:39 PM From DB/Inbox: Lucia A Keegan

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Text:

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 05768

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cyparis:
ACTION: UNESCO
INFO: AMBO DCM SCI POL ECON AMBU AMB

DISSEMINATION: UNESCOX
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:LOLIVER
DRAFTED: CHARGE:AKOSS
CLEARED: NONE

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0776
INFO RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2478
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0870
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 0550
RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 005768

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FROM USMISSION UNESCO PARIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/28/2016
TAGS: [UNESCO](#) [SCUL](#) [UNSC](#) [AL](#)
SUBJECT: (U) UNESCO: LEBANON RESOLUTION UPDATE II

REF: (A) PARIS 5463 (notal), (B) PARIS 5653 (notal)

¶1. (U) Classified by Andrew Koss, Deputy Chief of Mission, reason 1.4. (D)

¶2. (C) Summary. Though the resolution tabled by Lebanon and Morocco on Lebanese reconstruction to be discussed at the next UNESCO Executive Board (EB) (Sept. 26 - Oct. 12) remains just a place-holder and has yet to be drafted, the Israeli government remains fiercely opposed to any resolution. Though the Israelis have few options, they have no interest in compromise. Also, unknown is what effect the situation in Lebanon or the arrest of the Palestinian education minister will have on EB resolutions on educational and cultural institutions in Jerusalem and the Occupied Territories that are routinely negotiated behind-the-scenes and adopted by the Board without debate. Another source also reported that the Lebanon resolution will not be drafted until mid-September and that the Qatari chairman of the Arab group has no desire to have the situation politicized. End summary.

¶2. (C) Israeli ambassador to UNESCO David Kornbluth called on Ambassador Oliver on August 28. Kornbluth remains under instructions from Jerusalem to prevent the UNESCO Executive Board from considering any resolution on the situation in Lebanon. So far, the resolution remains just a place-holder and has yet to be drafted. Kornbluth said he had been exploring other options such as having Israel introduce a resolution of its own. In previous conversations with the DCM, Kornbluth had said that Israel would have to ask a friendly country like the U.S. to introduce a resolution (ref. A). He has now found that Israel can introduce its own counter-resolution, though it would have to be accepted by the Board's Bureau. (Comment: While the U.S. is a member of the Bureau, so is Moroccan ambassador Aziza Benani, who tends to be obdurate in these matters and would

likely use procedural questions to prevent the resolution from being considered.)

13. (C) Kornbluth also discussed the possibility that Francoise Riviere, the Assistant Director General for Culture, and the Secretariat would draft the resolution, much as is now done for

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the EB's regular resolutions on educational and cultural institutions in Jerusalem and the Occupied Territories. Though Riviere assumed this role in the past and did an acceptable job, Kornbluth was not particularly pleased with this possibility either.

14. (C) While Kornbluth insisted his ministry has given him no room for negotiation, he did discuss other options with Ambassador Oliver. One would be for Israel to piggy-back on the Lebanese resolution, though any Israeli changes would likely be voted down by the Board before the original resolution was considered, but it would highlight the political nature of the discussion. Another would be to expand the language to discuss two victims, both Israel and Lebanon, and to ask UNESCO to "explore" help to both sides. (Comment: Kornbluth made it clear that UNESCO's involvement in his country was the last thing his government would ask for.)

15. (C) Ambassador Oliver pointed out that if the discussion of the Danish cartoon issue at the last Board meeting was any indication, ultimately the Arab group would seek consensus. They showed last time that they do not want to politicize UNESCO and they likely will want to avoid that again.

16. (C) Ambassador Oliver also discussed the usual Palestinian resolutions with Kornbluth. Both agreed that there was no telling how the Lebanon situation or the recent arrest of the Palestinian education minister might affect those resolutions. Kornbluth was adamant that his government would only accept factual, mission-specific updates to the document. He also said that he had decent relations with the Palestinian observer to UNESCO and would meet quietly with him in coming days. He expressed relief that the observer is not from Hamas. He also plans to see the Jordanian ambassador. Ambassadors Oliver and Kornbluth will meet again on Sept. 5.

17. (C) In a later conversation, the Kuwaiti deputy permanent delegate told the DCM that he had spoken with the Qatari ambassador who heads the Arab group at UNESCO and urged the Qatari ambassador to keep the tone of the resolution non-political. He said New York was the place for political statements, not UNESCO. The Kuwaiti also warned the Qatari to watch out for the Syrian and Moroccan ambassadors who would likely push for a more hard-line resolution. He said that the Qatari agreed with his points. Drafting probably will not begin until o/a Sept. 15 when Arab ambassadors are all back in Paris. Oliver